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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4509
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 003822

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NEA/IPA FOR WILLIAMS/MAHER/WAECHTER;
NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/WATERS; TREASURY FOR NUGENT/ADKINS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/24/2016
TAGS: [ECON](#) [EAID](#) [EFIN](#) [KFTN](#) [PTER](#) [KWBG](#)
SUBJECT: PA PRESIDENT'S OFFICE DENIES SALARIES PAID TO
HAMAS FORCE

REF: JERUSALEM 3717

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) In an August 23 letter to the Consul General, President Abbas's Chief of Staff Rafiq Hussein stated that a story appearing in "Haaretz" newspaper alleging that Abbas had paid salaries to 5,000 Hamas "Operational Force" members "is totally untrue." Hussein added that the Office of the President "has not and will not pay the operational force salaries, and we remain true to our international commitments..." (Note: Reftel reported PA President's Office August 18 statement announcing payment of a flat-rate allowance to 170,000 Palestinians, paid from Arab League transfers and timed for the back-to-school period. End Note.)

¶2. (C) Hussein and Economic Advisor to the President Mohamad Mustafa had earlier provided verbal assurances to Econ Chief that the Hamas "operational force" was explicitly left out of the disbursement of the flat-rate allowances.

¶3. (SBU) Begin text of letter:

Dear Mr. Walles:

I would like to take this opportunity to reassure you and the Government of the United States of America that what appeared in "Haaretz" news flash today regarding giving salaries to 5,000 Hamas members of the operational force is totally untrue. The Office of the President has not and will not pay the operational force any salaries, and we remain true to our international commitments and to the President's declared position on the formation of this force. I hope that this clarifies the position of the Office of the President on this issue.

Yours Sincerely,
Rafiq Hussein
Chief of Staff

End Text.

WALLES